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COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN
Thirty-eighth session
7-18 March 1994
Item 5 (c) of the provisional agenda*

PRIORITY THEMES: PEACE: MEASURES TO ERADICATE VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN THE FAMILY AND SOCIETY

Statement submitted by the International Alliance of Women - Equal Rights, Equal Responsibilities, International Council of Women, International Council on Social Welfare, International Federation of Business and Professional Women, International Youth and Student Movement for the United Nations, Soroptimist International, World Federation of United Nations Associations (WFUNA), and Zonta International, non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council, category I; Inter-African Committee on Traditional Practices Affecting the Health of Women and Children (IAC), International Abolitionist Federation, International Association of Democratic Lawyers, International Association of Penal Law, International Commission of Jurists, International Council of Jewish Women, International Federation of Resistance Movements, International Federation of University Women, International Federation of Women in Legal Careers, International Movement for Fraternal Union Among Races and Peoples (UFER), Lutheran World Federation, National Council of German Women's Organizations - Federal Union of Women's Organizations and Women's Groups of German Associations E.V., Pan-Pacific and South-East Asia Women's Association, Socialist International Women, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, Women's International Zionist Organization, World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts, World Federation for Mental Health, World Federation of Methodist Women (WFMW), World Jewish Congress and World Union of Catholic Women's Organization, non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council, category II; and International Inner

* E/CN.6/1994/1.

Wheel, International Peace Bureau and Movement against Racism, and for Friendship among Peoples, non-governmental organizations on the roster

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 29 and 30 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1296 (XLIV) of 23 May 1968.

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Joint statement on measures needed to eliminate violence against women

The non-governmental organizations listed above have read with care the report of the Expert Group Meeting on Violence against Women. Before underlining certain points, we wish to inform the Commission of some activities which non-governmental organizations undertook in 1993:

(a) A statement signed by 28 non-governmental organizations was made to the Commission on Human Rights at its forty-ninth session. It asked that rape be explicitly recognized as a crime in international and humanitarian law;

(b) At the thirty-seventh session of the Commission on the Status of Women, 20 non-governmental organizations joined in urging the adoption of the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women. They urged also that the Commission condemn rape used for strategic purposes;

(c) Non-governmental organizations around the world lobbied with success for the integration of women's human rights in all human rights programmes and activities. In this regard, the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action adopted by the World Conference on Human Rights (Part III, chapter II.B, particularly paragraph 38) include important steps towards achieving the eradication of violence against women.

The non-governmental organizations listed above urge the Commission to adopt fully the proposals made by the Expert Group on Violence against Women, (E/CN.6/1994/4, annex) especially:

(a) Paragraph 23 (code of universal standards and minimum rules for responses to violence against women);

(b) Paragraphs 25 and 28 (Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women and adequate financial and human resources);

(c) Paragraph 29 (regular relationship between the Special Rapporteur and the Commission on the Status of Women and Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW);

(d) Paragraphs 45 and 63 (role of the media);

(e) Paragraphs 70-88 (peace, peace-keeping, emergencies and armed conflicts);

(f) Paragraphs 89-92 (refugees and displaced women).

We underline the need for the Committee to cooperate closely with all the United Nations human rights bodies, especially the treaty bodies (resolution 1993/46 of the Commission on Human Rights). We with to recommend that the Committee follow closely and make an input into the work of United Nations bodies concerned with peace, disarmament and human rights issues, the progress of which will contribute to the eradication of violence against women.

We urge the Commission to ensure that Governments establish a clear policy for the prevention of ill-treatment of women in custody and for their protection from rape and sexual abuse during interrogation.

We reiterate the requests made by non-governmental organizations to the Commission at the thirty-seventh session to (a) recommend the establishment of a permanent international penal court to judge war crimes and crimes against humanity and (b) call for the proclamation of an international year on violence against women.